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mnemonic phenomenon itself is also in its essence only a phenomenon of accumulation."

It is possible that the old view of memory conceived as a trace may have been insufficient, and may have interpreted it as a dead inactive impression like that of a seal, but a careful consideration of the facts will show that form is the indispensable and most important feature in the preservation of memory. As I conceive the nature of memory it is a form, not only of substance, but also of energy. Whatever energy may be stored up, the character of energy, its significance, its meaning, does not depend on any kind of force, be it electrical, or vital or mechanical but on the form of force, which again is dependent upon the impression preserved in the brain substance.

It has been my endeavor to bring out the all-importance of form, which theory becomes most apparent in biology.

Rignano's explanation of the way in which the germ plasma reproduces the succession of specific nervous currents which have been produced by phylogenesis appears to me somewhat stilted and could be greatly simplified by seeking the cause of memory purely in form and not in a specific substance deposited by a kind of nervous accumulator.

There is a third hypothesis proposed by Rignano which conceives the life process, especially assimilation, as "an internuclear oscillating nervous discharge," but Rignano himself considers the proposition a bold one and points out that the two other hypotheses are independent of the third. His work in this line is more tentative than safe in its constructions and we may add that in all his labors his criticism is the most valuable part of his work. Rignano is well read in the literature of his subject, perhaps more so than others, for the horizon of specialists is often limited to the publications that appear in their own native language. Rignano's book bristles with references to facts and experiments of great significance, and this feature of his labors alone would render his presentation both instructive and stimulating whether or not his two main theories are right.

P. C.

ECCENTRIC LITERATURE.

The authors of eccentric literature are usually cranks or mattoids.¹

¹ The term "mattoid" is preferable, to "crank," which is misused.

This literature is characterized by an association of false ideas based upon false premises, but which may be logically deduced. It is usually written in disregard of all known rules of composition and style, and its purpose is often difficult to discover. It is full of extravagant statements and visionary matter in philosophy, science, religion and politics. Eccentric literature has been called heterodox, but it has been remarked, that it is usually "heterodox ignorance."

As early as 1785, Adelung,² a German author, published a work of seven volumes on the "History of Fools," by which he meant biographies of "celebrated necromancers, alchemists, exorcists, conjurers, astrologers, soothsayers, prophets, fanatics, visionaries, fortune-tellers, prognosticators and other philosophical monsters." The author of this pioneer work said he desired to present to the public an assemblage of men who made it their business to oppose philosophy and sound reason, and thereby to imagine themselves great philosophers, but who rather brought philosophy into contempt.

One difficulty in selecting eccentric literature is due to the fact that some great minds, known to history, have manifested in their writings symptoms of eccentricity of all degrees until in some instances insanity has been reached. In fact, there are few sane people who have not during their lives been under the influence of some momentary illusion or hallucination. The greatest and wisest men have at times expressed such foolish ideas as not even ordinary people would have thought of saying. Highest reason has its freaks.

Eccentricity and deranged mentality, as manifested in geniuses, have been treated at length by the writer in another place;³ the intention here is to consider the writings of those whose eccentricity is more of a permanent nature and where minds are much less powerful, brilliant and durable, though their delirious ideas are sometimes expounded with much plainness and animation. Many aberrated persons with literary claims and scientific associations, produce volumes, in which the steps from eccentricity to partial or complete insanity can be traced. There is enough of such curious

² *Geschichte der menschlichen Narrheit*, etc., Leipsic, 1785.

³ See chapter on "Genius and Insanity" in Senate Document (187, 58th Congress, 3d Session), entitled *Man and Abnormal Man* (780 pages).

This document may be obtained gratis through any United States Senator or Representative, or by sending its price (40 cents) to the Superintendent of Documents at the Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

and eccentric literature almost to make a library. There are at least 284 authors who have written eccentric literature.

The following is a table giving the number of eccentric books according to subjects. It will be seen that religious works predominate; books on spiritism, which are numerous, have not been collected.

CLASS	NO.
Theology	82
Prophecy	44
Philosophy	36
Politics	28
Poetry and Drama	9
Language and Grammar	8
Miscellaneous subjects	20
	227

SYMPTOMS OF ECCENTRIC LITERATURE.

Some cranks in their writings continually play upon words to absurdity, or use large numbers of words to no purpose, even writing volumes full of redundancy. Others repeat ideas of great statesmen or philosophers, but distort them by exaggeration, often making them ridiculous. Another symptom of eccentric literature is a use of stereotyped phrases in a peculiar sense and repeated many times with useless details. Many words are underscored, and the writing is in different characters. Even the pages may have various colors. As an illustration of profuseness of writings, one work consisted of 117 volumes. In addition to prolixity, the purpose is not only absurd, but the nature of the books is often entirely foreign to the education of their authors. Thus a physician writes concerning geometry, and a cook on political economy. A pseudo-geologist discovers a secret way of embalming bodies that is known to any demonstrator of anatomy; a university professor in a treatise mentions the exhalations of the fish as an advantage of sea-bathing, and yet his book contained many good things, reaching a second edition.

The ideas of eccentric writers are not only exaggerated but there is sometimes a painful disproportion in them; thus after ex-

pressing a sublime conception, they suddenly descend to trite ideas which are usually opposed to the views of most people. Some choose difficult subjects, as the exposition of the Apocalypse or the squaring of the circle, possibly to give the impression of mental profundity. Books on machines for perpetual motion are of the eccentric type; so, also, are odd interpretations of scripture. Cranks try to prove great men mistaken. It attracts attention and seems flattering to them. For instance, much has been written to prove Newton wrong. Some simply dispute the statements of authorities in order to bring themselves into notoriety. Some persons also regard the Bacon-Shakespeare controversies as eccentric literature.

ECCENTRIC TITLES.

Eccentric books frequently have very long titles, and some are so peculiar as to leave no doubt as to the nature of the work. *Pneumatology of Spirits and their Fluid Manifestations*, is one illustration. Another book has nine titles and is dedicated to as many kings. The following is a title: "Problem of the Law of Justice solved by Arithmetic. Statement of what passed for many years between Dr. John Dee and some Spirits." Another work is dedicated to "Father and Mother, to Paris and the Universe." This title is sufficient: "A Doctrine where Chaos will replace Order, and Time put an end to our Aberrations: God, Destiny, Equity. By Equity to accomplish our Destiny, the Will of God."

SCULPTURE.

Artistic cranks entered the public competition at Rome, for a proposed monument to Victor Emanuel. Their productions were characterized by stupidity. Some of the designs were grotesque and the inscriptions irrelevant, referring to the artist himself and showing excessive vanity. Many who submitted designs were ignorant of art, being teachers of grammar, mathematics, medicine, law and military science.

POETRY AND LITERATURE.

It has been said of certain decadent poets, that it is very difficult to make anything out of their series of words, which being connected together according to the laws of syntax might be supposed to have some sense but have none, keeping one's mind on the stretch in a vacuum, like a conundrum without any answer.

In literature proper the mental aberrations of authors are less

concentrated than in philosophy and theology. The mind touches rather upon the surface of things. The figures, tropes and analogies are strange. Forms and expressions of ideas, rather than their abstract nature and value are considered. Long speculations are rare.

As an illustration of eccentricity in literature proper, a professor of history in the sixteenth century, when attacked with melancholia, employed his time on a work entitled, "Program of Universal History." He had the fixed idea that the annals of the Egyptians, Jews, Greeks and Romans were composed by fanatics and people without sense. As a matter of fact, he said, men have existed from eternity.

One author writes poetry on an enormous number of subjects, until he passes into mental ramblings and absurdities, yet through it all he preserves the rhythm. Another considering himself the greatest poet who ever existed, composes a heterogeneous mass of malice, pride, talent, vile defects and great qualities.

Walt Whitman's spirit of individuality, exaltation of ego, principle of pride and revolt caused him to become unbalanced. In him are symptoms found in those who proclaim themselves great men and universal reformers. Whitman says: "I have the idea of all. I know all. I am divine, without and within; I make all divine, that which I touch and all that touches me. My head is more than the churches, Bible and symbol of faith."

In certain individuals there seems to be a close relation between poetic power and insanity.

There are rare cases in which insanity increases intellectual power. Here is a case reported by physician. A very pious lady gradually became oppressed with a deep melancholic feeling, causing her mind to be deranged so that it was necessary to place her in an asylum. While there she expressed such remarkable ideas in verse, that they were written down. After she had recovered from her trouble she had no recollection of the matter and was not able to write with such elegance as when she had been deranged.

Another illustration is the composition by a lady confined in an insane asylum. The cause was the loss of her pet bird "Goldie":

"Wise people I know believe
That birds, when they have ceased to breathe,
Will never more revive;
But though I cannot tell you why,
I hope though Goldie chanced to die,
To see him yet alive.

"May there not be, if heaven please,
In Paradise both birds and trees?"

A young man who had become insane through disappointment in love, wrote this among other verses:

"Whene'er I hear the wild birds lay
And the echo in the grove,
And see the face of Nature gay
With beauty and with love,
I'll think that thou art with me still
By vale and murmuring stream,
And o'er the past my soul will dwell
In faint collected dream.
When all the charms of nature fade,
And Autumn leaf is strewn,
One charm will still be mine, sweet maid,
To dream of thee alone."

A graduate of Cambridge University, England, and winner of the best prize for the poem, became insane and was confined in an asylum. Though he had no paper, ink or pen, he wrote on the wooden panels of his room, by the aid of a key, a poem to the glory of King David, the Prophet. The following is the first stanza:

"He sang of God the mighty source,
Of all things, the stupendous force
On which all strength depends,
From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,
All pride, all power and enterprise
Commences, reigns and ends."

POLITICAL LITERATURE.

Political and sociological subjects are perhaps the most difficult to write about, requiring not only the highest rationality, but a practical and sound sense in adapting ideas to actual conditions in which passion and sentiment play an important rôle.

Those who go to political and sociological extremes or eccentricities usually have an appearance of calm when in the public eye. This may indicate a strong conviction based upon intense feeling, and when partisanship, personal interests and ambitions are involved, they furnish a subject attractive to disordered minds.

Demons, Counsellor in Amiens, France, published works, one of the titles of which is: "The Demonstration of the Fourth Part of Nothing and Something; and All; and the Quintessence taken from the Fourth Part of Nothing and its Dependencies containing the

Precepts of Sanctified Magic and Devout Invocation of *Demons*, in order to find the origin of the Evils of France and the Remedies for them. (8°, 1594, 78 pages and one error)."

The author, Demons, said that he had determined to bring to light a classification of the shades of his timid obscurity in the quintessence which he had taken from nothing and to give an explanation of the enigma of his invention.

Francis Davene, a fanatic dreamer, published much in verse and prose at Paris in 1649 to 1651. He wrote to indicate the royalty which he claimed God had given to him. He desired to prove that the world would end in 1655, and in his "Harmony of Love and Justice" he endeavored to show that Louis XIV could not be the son of Louis XIII. He was persuaded that he himself would supplant Louis XIV.

"Addressed to All the Powers of Europe." The author of this epistle was born at Copenhagen in 1644. At the age of 12, he had visions. He was proud to have made a compact with God, to expel the Turks from Europe and deliver Judea. In spite of his many visions, he lived to be 98 years of age.

Hoverland (born 1758) was strictly of the old regime, detesting new ideas, execrating those whom he called revolters. For thirty years he breathed calumnies and injury against those of his compatriots, whom he accused of liberalism. He manifested his eccentricity by walking in the streets dressed like a savage. He was a lawyer and member of the council of 500. After having exercised different public functions he wrote a history of his native town (Tournay) consisting of not less than 117 volumes, without order, plan or reason, an undigested mass of documents, full of calumnies, forgetting no one whom he did not like.

Herpain, a Belgian, called Usamer (1848), with a mind unbalanced by ideas of social progress, endeavored to have adopted universally, what he called a physiological language, so that his ideas might be comprehended by every one. He developed his system in an article which he sent in this language to the legislative assemblies of different countries. The following is the Invocation: "As soon as Your Majestic Presence had illumined the nothing, the nothing was made the means of existence. Then you willed to reign favorably over the essences and principles of beings were produced."

Another author dedicates his book on "Demons and Spirits," to all the sovereigns, king, emperors and princes of the four parts

of the world. He held that everything was spirit, as the falling of a cat from the roof, or smoke coming from a chimney.

PHILOSOPHY.

One of the most significant symptoms of mental lack of equilibrium is weakness in that logical faculty upon which philosophy especially depends. For it deals with abstract and speculative subjects, where the mind has less to restrain it from aberrations. Unbalanced persons have produced less intelligible results in philosophy than other subjects.

In 1792 an author of natural history made interesting researches on the antiquity of Brittany, but he developed theories on man, the universe and the spiritual world in eight large volumes called *The New Jerusalem*, in which he claimed to establish an harmonious union of the world of bodies with that of spirits; stating that the spirit of John the Baptist would manifest itself to him on the 26th, and that of Peter on the 30th of June 1861.

Another author (1852) finds in names and dates, seven harmonic laws, which rule in the events of history. He said there would be 278 popes, no more, no less.

Wronski, a Polish philosopher and visionary mathematician (born 1788, died 1853) claimed to have created a universal religion, made over the mathematical sciences and organized politics on a new basis. He placed himself in the attitude of a Messiah and another Newton. He boasted of revealing the definite theory of numbers and giving the solution of the existence of matter in its three states, solid, liquid and fluid of air. The titles of two of his works were as follows: "Messianicism, Final Union of Philosophy and Religion, Constituting the Absolute Philosophy" (Paris, 1831-39, 2. vols. 4°) and "The Political Secret of Napoleon as basis of the future morality of the world" (Paris, 1837, 8°).

Such titles are sufficient to indicate the strangeness of Wronski's ideas.

SCIENCE.

A German physician published (1595) at Leipsic, a book concerning a child born with a golden tooth, which he attributed to the influence of the stars.

Deyraux entitled his book (1855) "Discovery of the Veritable Astronomy, based upon the Law common to Movement of Bodies." In a footnote he says that this important discovery of the true

astronomy can aid investigation and account for the facts. Until this day, he adds, the origin of the facts has been ignored by all ancient and modern astronomers.

A certain member of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon and Counsellor of the Legation at Paris, in spite of all his titles and honors, must be classed among writers whose compositions are eccentric.

This academician filled his large apartment at Paris with birds in order to study their customs. He finally formulated a theory of determining the physical and moral dispositions of animals according to analogies, dress and colors, entering into details as to feathers and bills. He drew some peculiar conclusions. One was that if speech is wanting to the monkey, it is an advantage, because it preserves his liberty.

A learned and distinguished Orientalist (born 1663) presented the French Academy a memoir in which he claimed to show that Adam was 140 feet in height, Noah 50, Abraham 40 and Moses 25.

Jerome Cardan, a celebrated Italian physician, philosopher and charlatan, claimed the future was revealed to him by dreams and by marks upon his finger nails.

Another Italian physician, confined in an asylum, wrote works in 1496, on the Aristotelian philosophy, but endeavored to prove that Aristotle never existed.

Paracelsus (1536) was an alchemist, physician and philosopher. He was also a charlatan, but with undisputed talent and rambling mind. He wrote some 250 treatises. He peopled the world with demons and geniuses, and affirmed that he was in communication with celebrated personages of the other world.

Another author of a book entitled *The Great Scientific Restoration, Philosophic Mineralogy*," gave at the end a list of 52 different works, which he announced he would write on scientific questions.

Thomas Wirgman, with a capital of more than \$200,000, expended it all for printing his books, which were published in London at the commencement of this century. Not more than twenty copies were ever sold. The title of one of his books was *Grammar of Six Senses*, based upon three ideas, "time, space and eternity." The work was unintelligible. The author was fully convinced that when his ideas were universally adopted they would produce peace and harmony on earth and virtue would take the place of crime. In his application for the chair of philosophy at the University of Lon-

don, he wrote, "So long as I have a breath of life, I will not cease communicating to a new world the source of happiness." He wrote to George IV that if he did not adopt the principles of his books, neither he nor any of his subjects would be saved in the other world. One reason why his works cost him so much money was that he had special paper made and the pages colored differently, sometimes even with two colors on the same page; and when they did not please him, he would have others made.

William Martin entitled one of his works, *A New System of Natural Philosophy on the Principle of Perpetual Motion*, published at Newcastle in 1821.

He said perpetual motion was impossible through machinery, but added, "I had a strange dream. . . . and after awaking was absolutely convinced that I was the man whom Divine Majesty had chosen to discover the great secondary cause of all things and the veritable perpetual motion."

In an introduction to another work, he wishes long life and prosperity to the Ruler of Ireland, who knows that he, William Martin, has "completely effaced Newton, Bacon, Boyle and Lord Bolingbroke."

John Steward (born 1822) had a mania for traveling. He left his business in India, and walked through many parts of the earth. He then wrote books, of which two of the titles are: *Voyages to Discover the Source of Moral Movement* (300 pages) and *Books of Intellectual Life or Sun of the Moral World*, Published in the Year of Common Sense 7000 of the Astronomical History of the Chinese Tables."

In one of his works he places himself above Socrates. In another he claims to be the only man of nature, who has ever appeared in the world. As indicating still greater conceit and mental aberration he had the idea that all kings of the earth were conspiring to destroy his works, and he therefore besought his friends to preserve a few copies, and after wrapping them up carefully, to bury them seven or eight feet under the ground, taking care not to let the place be known until on their death bed, and then only as a secret.

RELIGION.

The aberrations of religious mattoids consist in emotions, passions and instinctive impulsions of the soul. This is a realm almost without limit, where hopes and fears take all forms in the flights of the imagination.

In fanaticism the realities of the material world disappear, not by the flight of reason but because the fanatic believes it is his duty to annihilate it in the interest of his soul. His whole existence is absorbed in his thought, which not only influences his aberrations but modifies all the phases of the external manifestations of his mind. His conjectures have no limit and his doctrines can become so exaggerated by intense enthusiasm or imagination, that they become not only eccentric, but so extreme as to border on insanity. As an illustration we have works such as the one with regard to "the mouth or nose of the glorious Virgin," or a sermon by Baxter of England on "Hooks and Eyes for Believers' Trousers." These are not only eccentric, but vulgar, and sometimes immoral.

A theologian wrote a book to show that the aborigines of South America were the direct descendant of the devil and one of the daughters of Noah, and that consequently it was impossible for South Americans to obtain either salvation or grace.

ISAAC NEWTON.

Isaac Newton in his commentary on Daniel and the Apocalypse (London, 1733) interpreted the expressions of the Hebrew prophets, "one time, two times and a half a time," to mean 1260 solar years, beginning with the year 800 A. D. Newton fixed the destruction of the Papacy in the year 2060. He also attempted to determine the time for the destruction of the world, and the coming of a new world where justice would reign.

It has been asked why such a distinguished mathematician should occupy himself with such visionary ideas. Some say it indicated a decline in his genius; others, that he acceded to the surroundings in which he lived. Philomneste⁴ does not accept those reasons, but says that Newton like all men with real genius believed himself invested with a divine mission. This belief increases with age; he sought an expression of it in the prophecies of the Bible where numbers, which had been the joy of his life, played a great rôle.

Peter Leroux, a visionary who mixed philosophical ideas, defined love as "the ideality of the reality of a part of the Infinite Being, reunited to the objectivity of the ego."

William Blake, a talented painter, engineer and poet, who saw and heard supernatural beings, reproduced them in crayon and then engraved them.

⁴ *Les Fous littéraires*, Brussels, 1880.

It is surprising that a clear-sighted *juris consul* in his latter days should allow himself to announce that he had received a messianic message.

The author of *Faith Disclosed by Reason in the Knowledge of God, of His Mysteries and of His Nature* (1680, 280 pages) was a grave man and counsellor of the King; nevertheless he was unbalanced, believing he held in his hand the truth of truths. His mental wanderings were unintelligible. He found in matter the three elements of the Trinity: (1) Salt, the generator of things corresponding to God the Father; (2) mercury, where extreme fluidity represents God the Son spread in the whole universe, and (3) sulphur, which by its property of uniting salt and mercury represents the Holy Spirit. His works were condemned.

Gleizes (born 1773, died 1845) wrote works on vegetarianism. He deserted his wife, whom he loved, because she would not cease eating meat. He said meat was atheistic, but fruits contained the true religion, and that vegetables were an antidote for all evils. He left ten volumes.

The writings of aberrated esthetics and mystics constitute many eccentric books, the extravagancies of which have been injurious to religion.

Another religious author fixed six thousand years as the duration of the world, saying that the man of sin, the anti-Christ, would appear in 1912 and rule forty-five years, and be exterminated in 1957.

As an illustration of wisdom mixed with absurdity, there was a distinguished Lutheran theologian of the 17th century who wrote learnedly on New Testament Greek, but subsequently became exalted and prophesied that the end of the world would come in the year 2000.

John Humphrey Noyes, who claimed the gift of prophecy, founded a sect of biblical perfectionists or communists called the Oneida Community. He claimed to have established a divine government on earth, declaring that marriage was a theft and fraud, just as property was. He did not recognize human legislation. Everything, including insignificant details, was designated as an inspiration from heaven.

While attending a clinic of Professor Flechsig on insanity at the University of Leipsic, the writer heard an address of a theological student who had become insane. The patient talked about twenty minutes on the doctrines of the Trinity in a most learned

way, insisting that a great error had been made, for instead of three there were really four persons in the Trinity. After finishing his somewhat incomprehensible arguments his last words as he left the room were: "Gentlemen, I am the fourth person."

WRITINGS ON ECCENTRIC LITERATURE.

As the number of writings on eccentric literature is not large, a list of the principal ones is given here:

- Achard. *Dictionnaire des Hommes illustres de la Provence*, Marseilles, 1736.
 Adelung. *Geschichte der menschlichen Narrheit*, etc., Leipsic, 1785 (7 vols).
American Journal of Insanity, 1848. Illustrations of insanity furnished by letters and writings of the insane.
 "Cent et Un." Paris, *L'advocat*, 1832.
 Delepiere, Octave. *Histoire littéraire des fous*, London, 1860, pp. 184.
 De Bure. *Bibliographie instructive*.
 Erdan, M. *La France mystique*, 1858.
 Grégoire, B. H. "L'histoire des sectes religieuses," Paris, *L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et des curieux*.
Mélanges de littérature maronique, 1852.
 Moreau, C. *Bibliographie des Mazarindes*.
 Nodier. *Bulletin du bibliophile*.
 Oettinger, E. M., *Bedlam littéraire*, 1809.
 Philomneste Junior. *Les fous littéraires*, Brussels, 1880, pp. 227.
 Polain, Louis A. *Catalogue*. Liège, 1842.
 Quérard. *Supercherries littéraires dévoilées*.

ARTHUR MACDONALD.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE LOGIC OF LUNACY.

The nature of reason is consistency and we are convinced that all attempts to construct a logic which would stand in contradiction to the old-fashioned so-called Aristotelian logic must necessarily end in failure.

Aristotelian logic can be expanded. A logic of probability may be developed and the rules of inductive logic can be more and more perfected and added to the old trite deductive system of syllogisms. The laws of actual thought have been investigated, a grammar of science has been written, an algebra of logic has been worked out, a logic of relatives has been conceived, a system of logical graphs has been invented, and the names of such men as Leibnitz and Lambert, George Boole, Karl Pierson, Ernst Schroeder, Louis Couturat and Charles S. Peirce are well known as promoters of this new